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THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY





138 *Unity School Library*
Hague CHIANITY AND SLAVERY:

A

R E V I E W

OF THE

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

BETWEEN

RICHARD FULLER, D.D.
OF BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA, AND

FRANCIS WAYLAND, D.D.
OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND.

ON

DOMESTIC SLAVERY, CONSIDERED AS A SCRIPTURAL
INSTITUTION.

BY

WILLIAM HAGUE.

BOSTON:

GOULD, KENDALL, & LINCOLN,
59 WASHINGTON STREET.

1847.

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P R E F A C E .

MORE than a year had elapsed after the publication of the work containing a correspondence between the Rev. Drs. FULLER and WAYLAND, and entitled, "Domestic Slavery, considered as a Scriptural Institution," before the author of the following pages had any thought of writing a review of the controversy.

Having long been a sincere admirer of Dr. Wayland as a writer, a philosopher, and a teacher, he could not but regret the more deeply, on that account, the position taken by him, as to the manner in which primitive Christianity treated slavery; but then, he had no doubt that some of his brethren more immediately connected with the periodical press would do justice to that main part of the discussion. No such review, however, has appeared.

Some time since, at a social meeting of the Boston Conference of Ministers, the writer was led to express his disappointment as to this matter, and to state his view of the *scriptural* argument. He was appointed by the

animous vote. In consequence
therefore, the author commits
under the full belief, that if its doctrine
will be good; and, on the other hand, if
it is erroneous, the error will be made known
by some few, at least, will become wiser by
BOSTON, March 24, 1847.

CHRISTIANITY AND SLAVERY.

Domestic Slavery, considered as a Scriptural Institution.
In a Correspondence between the Rev. RICHARD FULLER, D.D., of Beaufort, S. C., and the Rev. FRANCIS WAYLAND, D.D., of Providence, R. I. New York : Lewis Colby. Boston : Gould, Kendall & Lincoln.

WE have before us a remarkable book. In the lapse of ages, it will probably be regarded as an instructive fact in the history of Christian civilization, that in the nineteenth century, in the Republic of North America, — famed through the world as the asylum of the oppressed and the home of liberty, — two Christian ministers, distinguished for piety and learning, united in the common work of sending the gospel to the Pagan nations, should have felt themselves called upon to engage in an earnest discussion of the question, Whether Christianity sanctions slavery ; or whether the continuance of that relation between master and slave, which involves the acknowledgment of a right on the part of one man to hold the body and mind of another man as property, is compatible with the principles of Christianity, — with the letter or the spirit of its law ? Nor will the extraordinary character of this event be at all diminished by the consideration, that both of the disputants belonged to the denomination of Baptists, who had been often known in the world as the advocates of religious liberty, —

W. L. G. 1851
and all men be permitted to work
they are persuaded that he requires
in different centuries, have been
champions of the great truth, that
one is the binding rule of religion
to its possession every man has
every man will be judged.
The volume before us furnishes
a fact has transpired; that, after
being written, even by avowed
se of Christianity, for its effects on
lition of man; after all that has be-
rate the poor and the oppressed; as
has taught respecting the common
common redemption of the race;
prophecies which it has held forth, th-
centuries, touching the design of God
and shall form a common brotherhood
evidence which theologians have
proof of its being a divine revelation
influence on the abolition of slave
boldly asserted by a Christian mini-
of the slave

New Testament ; a position such, that, if it were true, would show that the "old commandment" of Judaism, which abolished slavery, was better than the new commandment of Christianity, which allows it ; would show that Christianity was not fit to win its way through all the tribes of men, as a universal religion ; would show, in spite of all its pretensions to miraculous evidence, that as yet the MESSIAH OF ANCIENT PROPHECY, the Messiah of man, the Deliverer of the oppressed, the Desire of nations, the preacher of "liberty to the captive," has not come ; and that, with the Jew, we must take our place of lowly waiting for the "Consolation of Israel," and the Promised seed in whom "all the families of the earth" are to be blessed.

Eloquent as is Dr. Fuller in argument and appeal, fervent as is the religious spirit which he breathes, earnest though he is as a preacher of pardon to the sinner, yet, by advocating such a doctrine of slavery as an element of Christianity, he has done greater disservice to the cause of religion and humanity, than could possibly be achieved by all the traffickers of human flesh whom the laws of Christian nations now condemn as pirates. We say this in sorrow, not in anger ; for to express one's deep, calm, solemn conviction of a terrible truth, is not at war with the law of kindness. The actual dealers of slaves, of whom we speak, avow their profession to be that of rapacity ; their motive to be the love of gain ; and it is impossible for them to corrupt public sentiment, as may the Christian teacher. They commit a great sin ; but to misrepresent Christianity on this subject is to take away the remedy for sin. They bring thousands of their fellow-

system. —
y but little, because they are a
nemies of their race; but the
on is revered as the interpreter
will. They can do nothing to
arks of the law around their tra
around the markets whose demand
but he does very much to re
nce around a scheme of oppress
etuate a social wrong on earth, “
f might shrink to own.” What th
that in him God may account it
judgment, and not a sin of the hes
but charity to the man must no
to his error. We must still decl
error; and, with the New Testam
nds, must say to the most amia
Though you, or an angel from hea
is doctrine as a part of Christ’s
onounce the sentiment to be wick
tichristian, and “accursed.”
In speaking thus, we are far from
discriminately, all those who stand
holders, as unwor

nominally master of a thousand slaves, is more truly a philanthropist, and more worthy the fellowship of the universal church, than is the Northern Christian who never saw a slave, and still declares that Christianity sanctions slavery. The former is a slaveholder in name, but not in truth and in spirit; the latter is called a non-slaveholder, but a change of residence would make him an owner of men and women, and he is now a slaveholder in principle, in feeling, and in guiltiness. The author of the Sermon on the Mount assures us, that God judges men, not merely according to their overt acts, but according to the intents of their hearts, — the objects of their approval or abhorrence.

Hence we have been deeply interested in the argument contained in these letters, conducted by a leading writer of the South and another of the North. Not being of those who would say, "This discussion belongs to the realm of abstractions; it is better to let it alone, and to deal only with facts;" we deem the discussion itself as a fact of the highest moment. For ourselves, we have not been aware, till recently, how extensively the opinion defended by Dr. Fuller prevails among Southern Christians,—how far they have departed from the purer doctrines of their fathers. We supposed that, to a wider extent than seems now to be the case, they had agreed with us in believing that Christianity entirely condemns the slave system; and that in proportion as their influence in the state was increasing, the day of emancipation was hastening on. We had often thought of them, as lacking a proper degree of zeal in the work; as being timid and tardy, and too subservient to the schemes of worldly

ere bowed down, to break every yoke
oppressed go free."

ile there are many things in these le
ntally thrown out on both sides, which
thy of notice at some time, we wish
sider the main question proposed, and
t which it is treated.

main question is, Does Christianity
avery? Dr. Fuller asserts the affirm

clearest terms. He says: "I find
condemning the abuses of slavery, but
g the system itself." Page 4.

ne matter stands thus: the Bible di
e some sort of slavery; if now the al
ed and deplored by me be essentials c
y, then the Bible did allow those abu
10.

avery was everywhere a part of the
ganization of the earth; and slaves
masters were members together of
ies; and minute instructions are give
s to their duties, without even an ins
hat it was the duty of masters to em

the apostles did not consider (and as a New Testament precept is for all ages, that no one is now justified in denouncing) slave-holding as a sin." Page 194.

From these citations it is evident, that the argument of Dr. Fuller, as to the teaching of the New Testament, rests on two points :

1. The fact that the relation of master and slave was recognized throughout the civilized world, by the law of the Roman empire.

2. The silence of the New Testament, as to the duty of dissolving that relation.

This argument has respect, *necessarily*, to the slave system recognized by the Roman law, which was then so extensively supreme, because there is no evidence that our Saviour or the apostles ever came in contact with slavery under the Jewish law. Among the people of Palestine, involuntary servitude had been brought to an end, hundreds of years before the Christian era, by the natural operation of the code of Moses. Every slave bought of the heathen received the offer of freedom at the end of every seventh year, if he were a Jewish proselyte ; and whether he were a Jewish proselyte or not, the jubilee trumpet sounded forth the decree of liberty at the close of every half century. The passage quoted by Dr. Fuller, from the xxv. chapter of Leviticus, which forbids the purchase of bondmen from any except the heathen and strangers, saying : " Of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids, and ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession ; they shall be your bondmen for ever ; " * must be understood, in consistency

* Verse 46.

and the trumpet sound through
land; and ye shall hallow the fifth
proclaim liberty throughout all the
THE INHABITANTS THEREOF: it shall
be unto you: and ye shall return
into his possession, and every man
his land."* Such was the law of jubilee
sales of men, as it did the sales of
land. It said: "According to the multi-
tude of years after the jubilee, thou shalt buy of
land according to the multitude of years
remaining to increase the price thereof, and ac-
cording to the shortness of years thou shalt diminish
the price." when, therefore, another law
said: "And the land shall be purchased of the
heathen, instead of the child of the
land." must be understood that the purchase
under the previous law, and that the mat-
ter of the statute is not the entail of prop-
erty on any class, but simply the con-
ditions in the purchase of servants, al-
though, in the purchase of the children of the
heathen. If there were any doubt on the

character of American slavery ; for nothing like that could have existed a single day in Palestine after the entrance of the Israelites. American slavery originated in kidnapping men and women from Africa ; but this was the only kind of *theft* which the law of Moses made a capital crime. "He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be *found in his hand*, he shall surely be put to death" (Ex. xxi. 16). The man-stealer, and the man-seller, and the slaveholder, were alike liable to capital punishment. The Mosaic law would have always prevented the slavery of the United States, and would destroy it instantly now, if put in operation. In Palestine, war, debt, poverty, and voluntary contract, originated, at different periods, a servitude which was temporary, the periodical abolition of which was provided for by law. Against this abolition, avarice would naturally revolt, and seek to evade the law for the sake of gain. On this point the Prophet Isaiah lifted up his voice like a trumpet, instead of treating it as a subject too delicate to be mentioned, "cried aloud and spared not," saying, "Behold, ye fast for strife, and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye *break every yoke*?"* If the churches of the South should make proclamation of a fast like this, who would doubt that it involved the emancipation of the slave, and that this would be a fast most acceptable to God?

Similar in spirit is the language of the

* Is. lviii. 6.

in the house of the Lord

the Lord came to Jeremiah saying, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I made a covenant with your fathers at I brought them forth out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. At the end of seven years let ye go the Hebrew who hath been with thee; and when he hath served thee seven years thou shalt let him go free from thee. But your fathers hearkened not unto me, nor did they give heed to my voice, neither did they give heed to their ear. And ye were now doing right in my sight in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbor, and making a covenant before me in the house of the Lord by my name. But ye turned away from my name, and caused every man his neighbor, and every man his handmaid, whom he had bought with money, to take liberty at their pleasure, to return them into subjection unto you, for servants and for handmaids. Thus saith the Lord: *Ye have not kept my covenant in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbor*

rusalem was plundered and burnt, and the Babylonish captivity made short work with the remnants of Jewish slavery, which had resisted the spirit of the Mosaic institutions. It is with good reason, therefore, that Mr. Barnes, in his work on slavery, reaches the conclusion, that "slavery altogether ceased in the land of Palestine," and asks, "On what evidence would a man rely to prove that slavery existed at all in that land in the time of the later prophets, of the Maccabees, or when the Saviour appeared? There are abundant proofs that it existed in Greece and in Rome; but what is the evidence that it existed in Judea? So far as I have been able to ascertain, there are no declarations that it did, to be found in the canonical books of the Old Testament, or in Josephus. There are no allusions to laws or customs which imply that it was prevalent. There are no facts, no coins or medals, which suppose it." Page 226.

Corroborative of this position is the fact, that the pictures of life and manners contained in the four gospels are not in harmony with the supposition of the existence of slavery among the Jews. In the parable of the prodigal son, which delineates the condition of a rich land-holder, the term to denote *servants* is *μυθοι*, from *μυθος*, a reward, and is properly rendered, hired servants. This word could not be applied to a slave. In the parable of the shepherd, in John x. the word *μυθωτος*, from the same root, is used, and is translated "hireling." The same word is employed for the servants of the fishermen, in the beginning of Mark's gospel. There is not furnished to us in the New Testament, or any contemporary history, the least vestige of a reason for believing

is adverse to all sin and all system but rebuked only the specific evils under his notice. Hence we read nothing denouncing the caste of India, the sports of gladiators, or the vices of the theatre, which were censured even by the Pagan moralists themselves. No argument, therefore, can be drawn in favor of slavery from the lack of a rebuke of it in the teaching of our Lord. On the other hand, the Jewish law, instead of sanctioning slavery, had already extirpated it from the land.

As important as is this distinction between the Jewish state of Judea and of the Gentile world, even in the operation of the Jewish and Roman law, it is altogether overlooked by Dr. Waugh; and it does not appear that Dr. Waugh has even to this point any particular attention bearing, however, on the main question, which is so important and momentous.

We now revert to the position of Dr. F. W. Waugh. He says that the Roman law established slavery; that the law addressed those who held the relat

All that can justly be said, seems to me to be this: the New Testament contains no *precept* prohibitory of slavery. This must, I think, be granted; but this is all." Page 89.

The mode in which the new dispensation is supposed to have borne upon the slave-system is thus expressed by Dr. Wayland: "By teaching the master his own accountability; by instilling into his mind the mild and humanizing truths of Christianity; by showing him the folly of sensuality and luxury, and the happiness derived from industry, frugality, and benevolence, it would prepare him, of his own accord, to liberate his slave, and to use all his influence toward the abolition of those laws by which slavery was maintained. By teaching the slave his value and his responsibility as a man, and subjecting his passions and appetites to the laws of Christianity, and thus raising him to his true rank as an intellectual and moral being, it would prepare him for the freedom to which he was entitled, and render the liberty which it conferred a blessing to him, as well as to the State of which he now, for the first time, formed a part." Page 100. But this statement of the case, it appears to us, falls far short of the truth, and grants a great deal too much; it involves a concession, which gives to the scriptural argument of his opponent an appearance of strength which it does not really possess. It is yielding to the advocate of slavery an advantage, which, in Dr. Fuller's hands, has been made to take on the aspect of a triumph. All the world confess that Dr. Wayland is an elegant writer and a strong reasoner: but the strongest reasoner cannot *create* truth; the highest result that he can achieve, in a discussion like

gth. To give it force and point it with quickening and command the conscience of the slaveholder, is rare, when Dr. Wayland is borne along by the force of his reasoning within the realm of the ideal, or utters in our ears the appeals of Christian philanthropy, our hearts answer to the potent spell of "thoughts that burn," and bow our reverence before the majesty of truth. He speaks as an interpreter of the Bible, seeking to give voice to the truth; he seems to have been "shorn of his strength," and to appear before us as a weaker man. What he says is well said, but the effect is weak. The utterance is feeble and tremulous, compared with the clear, bold, and awful propositions of the Bible.

"The mind of Christ," on a subject of the deepest interest to all time, is made obscure to the weakest inquirer; and though our Lord is in fact befriending the right side

ganized evil, by positive enactments, and by the inculcation of a great principle which shall work like leaven and gradually subvert it; of the superior wisdom of the latter method; and then urges a defence of the apostles for tolerating slavery as a social evil, on the ground that, by this subtle and effectual method, they sought to accomplish its extinction? If the Christian doctrine "hath this extent, no more," it will be very slow in the work of delivering the American captive; and our regret, therefore, on reading such a statement of it, has been increased by perceiving that Mr. Barnes has taken substantially the same position.

But in all these exhibitions of the scriptural doctrine, we doubt not that there is a cardinal mistake; and that mistake is in defining the relation denoted by the words "servant" and "master," *δουλος*, and *κυριος* or *δεσποτης*, by the law of Rome instead of "the law of Christ." In the community of Christians this latter governed all relations. For unto whom were these three epistles of Paul and one of Peter, which contain the passages referred to, originally addressed? To the world at large? No. To the subjects of the Roman empire, as such? No. To men, as men and citizens? No. They were addressed to little communities of Christians voluntarily united as churches, as those who were "called to be saints," "the faithful brethren in Christ;" to those who had "come out from the world and been separate;" to the regenerated, baptized, and sworn subjects of the Messiah's kingdom; to those who had received, as their first lesson, the doctrine that, unless they could willingly give up "houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands" (or ser-

... and broken down the mid-
artition between them, and made the
her in heavenly places." Before the
written, all these persons had risen
level of the Roman law to a higher
1, wherein Christ swayed a sceptre o
ty ; unto whom, looking up, they cou
the voice of a common adoration, in r
own announcement to them, Thou al
master, and ALL WE ARE BRETHREN.
change so great as this, expressed or i
ery title, formulary, and peculiar ph
postolic epistles, modified at once i
nent relations of life,— held forth t
a new doctrine of right, a new standa
to judge of all the duties pertaining
tions in which they stood, and new m
on, drawn from their communion as s
mmon Lord, and heirs of the same he
ritance. And after they had thus " le
the truth as it was in him "—over

violence, or to bind him by the terrors of the civil law to do service against his own consent, lest silence on this subject should be fairly construed into a divine toleration of the prevailing heathen custom? As well might we suppose that special instructions would be necessary to direct them not to sacrifice their children unto Moloch, or not to fight each other as gladiators, or not to obey the law of the emperor which commanded all faithful citizens to deliver up the Christians to the civil authority. Where the law of the empire was at variance with the law of Christ, who can doubt to which they would yield the supremacy?

That this view of the case is true and just, will appear further, if we consider how greatly a knowledge of the law of Christ modified a Christian's sense of duty touching the other permanent relations of life. It is certainly an error into which many have fallen, to discuss this subject as if, by the law of Rome, *the right of slave-property inhered only in the relation indicated by the words master and servant*; whereas it pertained as really to the relation indicated in the New Testament by the words *γονεὺς* and *τεκνόν* — parent and child. Any school-boy may learn the origin of this domestic slavery from the first chapter of Goldsmith's History of Rome. It is clear, not only from Cicero, in his treatise on the laws, but from nearly all the Roman writers, historians, and poets, that every father had the power of life and death over his children — could expose them to death in infancy; and not only so, but a child was not deemed legitimate, or treated as such, unless the father took it formally from the ground, and placed it on his bosom. Hence arose

ased, if they deserved it. Hence, s
led a domestic judge or magistrate, b
son could acquire no property but by h
sent ; and what he did thus acquire
peculium, as that of a slave.* The
a son was, in some respects, harder
a slave. A slave, when sold once, bec
t a son, not, unless sold three tim
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s promoted to any public office, but
ished. For it continued, not only o
e of the children, but likewise ex
andchildren and great-grandchildre
them became their own masters (sui
e death of their father and grandf
ughter, by marriage, passed from the
r father under that of her husband."
In the emancipation of a son from th
of his father, the law prescribed
ocess, which the parties were obliged
before th

be repeated, either on the same day and before the same witnesses, or on different days and before different witnesses; and then the purchaser, instead of manumitting him, which would have conferred a *jus patronatus* on himself, sold him back to the natural father, who immediately manumitted him by the same formalities as a slave. Thus the son became his own master. *Sui juris factus est.* — Livy, VII. 16. In emancipating a daughter or grandchildren, the same formalities were used, but only once; they were not thrice repeated, as in emancipating a son. *Unica mancipatio sufficiebat.*"

Tedious as these processes seem, they were rigidly observed; and there was very little abatement of them until the reign of Justinian, five centuries after Christ. These laws were not read letter: the incidental allusions to paternal authority indicate that the severest executions of them were familiar to the minds of the people. Thus Sallust, in his history of Catiline's conspiracy (§ 40), says, "A Fulvius, son of a senator, was taken on the road, brought back to the city, and put to death by his father's orders." In his history of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Gibbon remarks, "The exclusive, absolute, and perpetual dominion of the father over his children, is peculiar to the Roman jurisprudence, and seems to be coeval with the foundation of the city. The paternal power was instituted or confirmed by Romulus himself; and, after the practice of three centuries, it was inscribed on the fourth table of the Decemvirs. In the forum, the senate, or the camp, the adult of a Roman citizen enjoyed the public and private rights of a PERSON: in his father's house, he was a mere THING; confounded by the laws

he son, was immediately lost in the
he father. At the call of indigence or
master of a family could dispose of
r his slaves. According to his c
ather might chastise the real or imag
f his children by stripes, by impri
xile, by sending them to the country
hains among the meanest of his ser
majesty of a parent was armed with
f life and death; and the exam
loody executions which were someti
nd never punished, may be traced i
f Rome beyond the times of Pomp
ustus. Without fear, though not wit
f abuse, the Roman legislators had
nbounded confidence in the sentimen
al love; and the oppression was t
ie assurance, that each generation n
i its turn to the awful dignity of
aster." *

But now, to all this antichristian
erred by the Roman law on the par

nothing of this. Let us ask, in the strain of the writers on slavery, whence this profound silence on these important points of Christian ethics, which must have attracted the notice of the apostles? Is it not clear as the light, that this deeply rooted and organized evil of *filial slavery* arising from Pagan ideas and usages, the apostles thought it expedient to tolerate awhile, but to inculcate broad principles which should work like leaven, gradually extirpate it, and so, in the process of time, raise the members of the Christian family to that dignity of freedom, that security of life, and to that equality of privileges, which were conferred by the Jewish law before the coming of Messiah? Such is the apology to be made for the apostles in this case, according to the reasonings and concessions against which we speak. And is this the best defence which we, as Christians, can urge for the silence of Paul, and Peter, and John, respecting these things? If so, well may they pray from their celestial exaltation, Lord, save us from our friends—shield thou our apostolic character from the imputations of those who are called by thy name and acknowledge our authority.

Thanks be unto God, we are not reduced to the necessity of acquiescing in any such apologies or explanations touching the silence of the apostles on the duty of setting captives or children free. These evils were not written upon, as practical matters, to Christian churches, because, under "the law of Christ," the son needed no emancipation. When that law was received by a family, the son was already free. The father's *right* to govern him, during his minority, arose from his *duty* to guard him in years of

SUCH HORRIBLE EVILS —

on the relation of father and son
of the son to liberty, or on the
pation, it was enough, simply to
provoke not your children to wrat
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Children, obey your parents in t
right. Honor thy father and th
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spiritual kingdom of Christ, w
had sway, Christianity did not, t
erate the filial slavery of Rome
tolerate her servile slavery. T
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other; and the idea of tolera
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early times, until it appeared
the most abominable and fatal

Not only in the relation of
father but also in that of the v

other refuge, to conform themselves entirely to the temper of their husbands.— But if she committed any fault, the injured person was her judge, and determined the degree of her punishment. In case of adultery, or where it was found she had drunk wine (which the Greeks would look upon as the least of all crimes), her relations, together with her husband, were appointed her judges, who were allowed by Romulus to punish both these crimes with death.* This law, of so ancient date, continued to be operative under the empire. Tacitus mentions a case which occurred at Rome, in the year 57, in the reign of Nero :—“ Pomponia Græcina, a woman of illustrious birth, and the wife of Plantius, who, on his return from Britain, entered the city with the pomp of an ovation, was accused of embracing a foreign superstition. The matter was referred to the jurisdiction of her husband. Plautius, *in conformity to ancient usage*, called together a number of her relations, and in their presence sat in judgment on the conduct of his wife.† It has often been said, to the honor of Roman chastity, that for more than five centuries not an instance of divorce transpired in Rome ; but it is very evident that this fact is to be accounted for, rather from the rigor of the law, which bound the destiny of the wife to that of her husband, than from the superior virtue of the people. There was little occasion for a formal divorce where a husband exercised the authority of an absolute despot, and where an offending wife had no right of appeal from his decision to that of a civil tribunal.

Another feature of the marriage relation, under

* *Dionys. Hal. ii. 25.*

† *Annal. xiii. 32.*

... they were better than the
mentions that when the Camp
to go to Rome to pay their tax
petition that the children, whom
man wives, might be treated :
made their lawful heirs.† In
union was not dignified by the r
any more than was a union be
in both cases it was stigmatized
grading appellation.† Of this
law there was no change until
Emperor Caracalla. During m
turies of the Christian era, the c
have sprung from the marriage
zen and a Jew, or a Greek, were
and honors of a legitimate birth
who was a Roman citizen, decla
a right to "lead about a wife"
had he or any one of the Roma
pleased to marry a Galatian or
tian, the law would, as far as
rights, have placed the offspring
on a level with the children of s

that in the epistles of Paul, all of which were addressed to persons living under the Roman empire, no care is taken to guard the churches against the specific evils of this Pagan legislation, which, in the eyes of multitudes, had been enshrined and hallowed by time ; had been blended with the very elements of domestic and social life ; had been sustained in every age by the most illustrious examples, and had interwoven itself with the earliest remembrances and associations of the civilized world, touching human rights, the fitness of things, and the moral order of the universe. Strange as it may seem to some, no husband, in all the realm of the Cæsars, is told that his wife had been raised by Christianity above the level of her condition under the Roman law. No one is told that the domestic despotism, which Roman society was based, was an abomination in the sight of Heaven, and that it was a transgression of the original law of Paradise, which placed the man and the woman on the ground of a true moral equality. No Roman citizen is forbidden to scourge his wife for drinking wine ! Even her life is left at his mercy ; and in the New Testament there is not issued a single command forbidding a Christian man to kill his wife for any fault which might render her, in his judgment, worthy of death ! And yet Christianity arose and spread in a part of the earth where it found the exercise of such power not uncommon, but where that power was embodied in forms of law, enthroned in the palace, sustained in the prætorium, and revered by public opinion. What now shall we infer from the silence of the sacred scripture on these points ? The domestic relations themselves are fully recogniz-

ate all these things, being content to to
oad and mighty principles which, worl
lly at the core of society, would a
eneration, after a series of ages, an
ounds of expediency, withheld *from*
ciples the plain truth of God with
imate effect? Certainly; according t
sions of those who have controverted
, this must be the explanation; but,
the reasonings of Dr. Fuller himse
nity must have intended to sanction
vers which these relations had so lon
, and only to guard against their abu
l any man who has become con
ristianity by reading the gospels, by li
rist's own discourses, and by opening
their spirit, remain calmly satisfied w
hese positions? By no means. He
equally from them both. Indeed, I
his reply to Dr. Wayland's explar
point, writes like a man who could
pising the apostles themselves if they
the truth is that man and his

asserted their purity from the blood of all men, because they "had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God." Yet they had shunned even to hint to masters that they were living in a "sin of appalling magnitude," and had kept back truth, which, if you are right, was of tremendous importance."

These words must be felt forcibly by those to whom they are addressed ; but we thank God that the New Testament presents no such difficulty as that which suggested this appeal on behalf of the apostles. The reason why those faithful guides did not hint to masters that they were living in "a sin of appalling magnitude," was not that slaveholding had been sanctified, but simply because these persons, at the era of their conversion to Christianity, had entered into a new spiritual kingdom, and interpreted all their relations and duties by the light of its heavenly principles, and not by the light of the Roman law or any other human code. Their souls had risen superior to the Roman law, as a guide to duty or a rule of life, as truly as our Christian converts in China have risen above the law of "the celestial empire." Christianity had not yet become corrupted ; its public teachers had not quite yet begun to modify its oracles so as to suit a false philosophy, to harmonize with the prevailing ideas of Roman civilization, and so to turn away its disciples "from the simplicity that is in Christ." These first Christians used words which had a weight of meaning in them, when they spoke of their moral isolation from society, when they called themselves "a peculiar people," the subjects of a "new creation," members of "the household of God," "fellow-citizens of the com-

any, the sentence of Christ the Mount possessed more moral efficacy, than all the lectures, preachers, and the laws of the twelve together. Before they took the vocation, they had "counted the cost, they were ready to suffer the loss of all things as in them lay, they obeyed the law, for their lives they "surpassed the law, entirely did the word of Christ rule them, would not allow the civil law to prevail on matters which pertained to their relations. "Dare any of you," said he to some who needed special instruction, "any of you, having a matter against you, go to law before the unjust, and the saints?"† Far from availing themselves of the power granted by the civil law to brethren in bondage, their religion required them to refer to that law any question of duties to each other.

Now in reading what is written of the church constituted, it is a great error to suppose that

These the early churches had acknowledged as their guide; to these they had vowed allegiance. Whatever conflicted with these, they had sworn to abandon, in the very act of their baptism, by which they had owned the sovereignty of the Messiah, in whose kingdom there was no place found for those distinctions of privilege, which, according to the Roman law, pertained to rank, sex, birth, blood, and nationality: "For," says the apostle, "as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ; there is neither Jew nor Greek — there is neither *bond nor free* — there is neither male nor female; **FOR YE are all one IN CHRIST JESUS.**"* That legislation which had raised one class above another, on the ground of those distinctions which are here named, primitive Christianity thus heartily renounced, as being incompatible with the law of Christ.

In order to feel the force of this statement, let any one fairly consider what a weight of argument the phrase which we have just repeated, carried with it to the ear of a primitive Christian. "**THE LAW OF CHRIST!**" In the apostolic age that was no mere abstraction. It was the Law of laws. Its authority was imperial. Its decision was ultimate. In addressing the church of Galatia, Paul said, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil *the law of Christ*:"† thus appealing to it, without citing the words of any precept, he implied that it was well understood. When it was referred to in this way, all knew that the law of benevolence — the law of mutual love — was intended, by way of eminence. The apostle James

* Galatians, iii. 27, 28.

† Galatians, vi. 2.

...with respect to persons, ye are
convicted of the law as transgressors.
The Lord had laid it down, in Deuteronomy
among the first principles of things whatsoever ye would do
to you, do ye even so to them; and the prophets."† The
neighbor he connected with such duties,
and on these two commandments
all true religion depends.‡ I
proceeds to expound this law respecting
what does he teach as to its bearing?
Did he imply that it was to be limited to
particular nation, or rank, or color,
or of place? The majority of his hearers
knew, did limit it by their sectional
national antipathies; but in the case of the
good Samaritan, he taught them to
erase these bounds, enjoins love to
our fellow-creature and our brother.
to do good to *all men* as we hear of Jesus.
The Priest and the Levite of his day
such an interpretation with contentment
to our ears.

one another ; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." However a refined and artful criticism may treat such precepts in these days, they were understood by the early Christians in their plain sense, and interpreted according to "the simplicity that is in Christ." A community governed by such laws as these, could never make a man serve as a slave, nor would it be possible for one of them to hold his Christian brother in bondage against his will for a single hour.

Moreover, it may be well to observe, in this connection, that the distinction on which the temporary slavery of Judea had been founded by the Mosaic code was entirely abolished by Christianity : we mean the distinction between Jews and Heathen. The breaking down of this "middle wall of partition" was the great glory of the new dispensation. We know how deeply "the leading men" of our Saviour's generation were offended with his teaching on this point ; how bitterly Jewish pride must have scowled upon him, when he said, in allusion to a Gentile's faith, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven ; but the *children of the kingdom* shall be cast out into outer darkness." The preaching of this doctrine was a bold feature in the ministry of the apostles ; and the mere mention of it, by one of them, caused a crowd in Jerusalem to give vent to their anger by casting dust into the air, and by crying aloud, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live." * Yet these mar-

* Acts xxii, 22.

pend on a distinction which it was in Christianity to abolish at the very outset. It is easily imagined how abhorrent from the notions and sentiments of the first disciples would have been the idea of a slave-system in the church.

In exact accordance with these views, the style and manner of apostolic address in the epistles of the New Testament. The terms used designate the relation of master and servant, not those which imply man's ownership. And from the terms themselves, the advocates of slavery can prove nothing, because the corresponding terms are used in language where slavery does not exist. The exact import of the term will vary according to the law by which it determines the condition of a *doulos*, or servant, just as it is now in this land; in Carolina a servant means a slave, and in New England a freeman voluntarily hired.

It is not, however, the relation of master and servant which is the subject of the

This class is designated by being "under the yoke." "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." This, as Christians, they were urged to do, even though they might be subject to the worst oppression, in agreement with the address of Peter to the same class; "for this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, *suffering wrongfully*." A heathen master, interpreting the rights of a servant by the light of the Roman law, would be very likely to commit acts of gross injustice; but the precept enjoining a meek endurance of this wrong, for Christ's sake, can, of course, furnish no sanction to the master's continuance of it. But now, in this epistle to Timothy, Paul proceeds, in the next sentence, to speak of a different class of cases; those in which *both* the parties were Christians. And here it is quite remarkable, that, instead of directing masters to treat their servants kindly, he calls upon servants themselves to *beware lest they should* DESPISE THEIR MASTERS! His words are, "And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are *brethren*; but rather do them service because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit." Who does not see that this exhortation arose from the fact, that, when both the parties had come under the law of Christ, Christianity had changed the relation in which they stood — had enfranchised the slave — had made him one of the "brethren" — had invested him with a new dignity and new rights; so that now, instead of the master being under a new temptation to treat the servant wrongfully, there was greater danger lest the ser-

the relation of these two classes of people, both had come "under the law" of compensation. They had now risen to the condition described in the words of the Lord, "One is your Master, even Christ; ye are brethren." Violence, or injection to bondage, was incompatible with the change; and now the apostle was charged that the parties should not separate, but by continuing together on the same terms, and, in the discharge of their duty, should prove to the world that the Christian love is a better cement for society than the law of force. No class of persons had the power to afford a brighter demonstration of the truth than that of enfranchised servants. If they acknowledged themselves of their acknowledged masters, the new law would be dishonored; if they remained faithful service from a principle of religious obligation, Christianity would be revealed, and they, by their example, would reveal its moral and conservative power, and would be sure to gain new converts.

wise, just let him imagine how preposterous it would seem for any grave and reverend bishop of our day, or for any public body in the country, to send a message to the young pastors of South Carolina, urging them to teach the slaves of Christian planters "not to despise their masters"! Surely, such a message would sound strangely to the planters themselves; and if it were carried into effect by some obedient Timothy, they would see "the foolishness of preaching," in a new point of light.

The same idea of a change in the relations of these two classes accomplished by Christianity, is implied and indicated by Paul's address to those who belonged to the church of Ephesus.* There he first addresses servants, and urges them to be exemplary in rendering obedience to their masters, for the sake of honoring the cause of Christianity—"as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service to the Lord, AND NOT TO MEN." Undoubtedly, this precept was intended to be as unlimited as that given by Peter (1 Pet. ii. 19), that is, to cases wherein the servant was called to "endure grief, for conscience toward God, *suffering wrongfully*." However froward or perverse (*σκολιος*) the master might be, however unjust his demands, the Christian servant was summoned to the exercise of patience and submission, in imitation of Christ, who, "when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously." Of course, Peter did not mean to sanction the wrong; and so, too, in this exhortation of Paul to the Ephesians,

* Eph. vi. 5—9.

him to cultivate all men, on the ground of right or justice, but would reward his submission to were exercised in order to promote and triumphs of religion. The principle by which the Christian servant is thus, is thus expressed: "With service to the Lord, and not to men whatsoever good thing any man shall he receive of the Lord, bond or free."

But when, in the next sentence transition, and addresses himself to the masters, his words are significant; for, while he tells them that tribunal where there is no appeal, he not only forbids their government of their servants, but from *threatening* to do so. He tells them, do the same things unto your servants, knowing that you will be judged of heaven; neither is there respect of persons. In the Greek text,

against their availing themselves of power conferred by the Roman law in the government of their servants. It was an explicit command to them to rise above the Roman law in this relation, and to regulate their conduct by the law of Christ, at whose judgment-seat they must stand. But the Roman law being set aside, where could the Christian master find any authority in the law of Christ for holding his brethren in involuntary servitude by means of violence? Such a pretension no man possessing ordinary self-respect, would venture to set up. An intelligent Southerner has aptly said, that the slave system, as it is, may be defended on the ground of necessity, just as war is defended, in some cases, "because the government which it requires is nothing more nor less than a prevalence of martial law." This witness is true; but how a state of martial law is to be maintained by men whose religion forbids them, not merely to remit legal punishments, but even to "forbear threatening," is a problem which yet remains for those Christian casuists who claim the blessed Jesus as the patron of slavery.

The passage in the epistle to the Colossians (iii. 22 — 25 and iv. 1) presents no feature of the case different from that which has already been exhibited. Christian servants were exhorted to cultivate the domestic virtues on those same grounds which have been already suggested. They are bidden to rise superior to the legal relation, and to yield a *voluntary* service for the sake of their heavenly Master, and then follow these spirit-stirring words: "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily to the Lord, and *not to men*, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive

had become Christians, is, in this brief. It simply commands them to remember their own accountablers, give unto your servants that and equal, knowing that you also in heaven." There is not a free world, and there never will be o precept will not be appropriate and

There is, in the New Testament, tolic precept which relates to the of servants. It is in the epistle (10); but its letter and spirit are in ance with those which we have al This class of persons are urged relation in which they stood a mea ing the Christian religion; to do th as to "adorn the doctrine of God o all things." In that age of arde love, the promotion of the cause o deemed a counterpoise to every evi

and easy for them to respond to the apostle's appeal: "Art thou called, being a servant? Care not for it; but if thou mayest be free, use it rather: for he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman.*

As an incidental illustration of this state of things which we have been contemplating, it would be difficult to imagine any thing more expressive than the letter of Paul to Philemon. The whole of it is in exact accordance with that condition of the Christian church, which distinguished the apostolic age, when it consisted of scattered communities in Pagan lands, who had come under the law of Christ, and had ceased to determine their duties by the civil law, or to avail themselves of the powers which it conferred, to promote their own worldly benefit by acts of oppression. Onesimus had been the slave of Philemon. He had fled away from his master, and became a Christian, under the ministry of Paul, at Rome. This converted slave the apostle wished to retain at Rome, to minister unto his own necessities; but he did not wish to do it without the concurrence of his beloved Philemon, his "fellow-laborer." According to the law of Rome, Onesimus was still the property of Philemon, who, as a *citizen*, had a legal claim upon all his services; but the letter does not intimate the slightest probability that Philemon, the *Christian*, would or could urge that claim. So far from this, it is distinctly asserted that the relation of the two parties had been essentially changed. How could that fact be more clearly expressed than in the following words: "For

* 1 Cor. vii. 21, 22.

letter against that sophistry which Onesimus was Philemon's brother, a *Christian*, but refuses to extend the acknowledgment of brotherhood to *civil* common life. It shows that they do not speak of brotherhood in some spiritual sense, which had no practical value in a sense which would develop practical benefits to Onesimus as a human creature possessing a kindred nature with the same moral, social, and civil abilities as was Philemon himself. There need be no difficulty in admitting that there is a great change, when we see that the happiness and interests of Onesimus are his own, and says to his former master, "thou count me as a partner, receive me as thyself."

Only a single observation further, is necessary here ; which is, of Paul's ———

him back at all ; but he concluded that it would be most satisfactory, on the whole, to place it within the power of his old Colossian friend to express his own feelings towards Onesimus, as a man and a Christian. Mark the expression of this sentiment : " Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me, in the bonds of the gospel : but without thy mind would I do nothing, that thy benefit should not be, as it were, of necessity, but willingly." A similar phrase occurs in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (ix. 7), where Paul shows them, that, although they were bound by the law of Christ to contribute a supply to the wants of their persecuted brethren, he wished them to do it from a principle of love, and not by constraint : " Every man, as he has purposed in his heart, so let him give ; not grudgingly or of necessity." The style of address in the letter to Philemon is analogous to this ; for although the law of Christ forbade him to hold his " beloved brother " Onesimus in a state of servitude, by force or threatening, yet Paul deemed it desirable that Philemon should show openly that he was governed by *Christian principle* in this case, and not by a sense of hard constraint, or the awe of an apostolic command.

We have now examined those precepts of the apostles, touching relative duties, on which the advocates of slavery found their argument. It appears to us, not merely that they accord with the position which we have taken on the doctrine of Christianity, but that they cannot be clearly and consistently understood unless they are seen from this point of view. There is one statement of Paul, however, bearing on the whole

possession a man who had
servitude never originated :
if in any house, or village,
nity, there had been found a
owned such an origin, the Mo
abolished it immediately whe
established. Now, in the c
Epistle to Timothy (i. 10
crime thus treated of old in
light, when he classes men-ste
ers, and perjured persons, and
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slavery did originate in man-s
the civil law has denounced
who now hold in their possessi
of the first captives, have no
God, any more right to their p
than our fathers had to the f
selves, whom they purchased
the bloody slave-dealer, fresh

by the assumed sanctions of religion, He stored vengeance hung over the Ammon-
 ring four centuries, until "their iniquity
 ll," will in like manner sweep this whole
 of sanctimonious oppression with the be-
 desolation, and attest to the universe, by
 ighty acts, that "the throne of iniquity hath
 owship" with heaven.

her religion, philosophy, nor humanity,
 any standing-place whereon a man may
 uch a claim of right by the plea of pre-
 n. There is nothing in human nature
 responds to such an argument, when we
 he case closely home to ourselves. Time
 e know, when in Algiers there were a
 umber of white slaves, both English and
 ans. Suppose, for a moment, that our own
 nent had never succeeded in rescuing our
 itizens from that foreign bondage, and
 w their descendants, our own relatives by
 nd family, had become the inheritance of
 race of owners. What if, on demanding
 ease of these captives, their lords should
 with such *Christian* arguments as are
 in the letters of Dr. Fuller, should declare
 at they had not had any thing to do with
 g those poor people there, that they had
 themselves in a relation of ownership to
 at this had now become a permanent el-
 of their social organization, that slavery
 en tolerated by our own holy religion in
 nan empire, and that they now appealed
 y our regard to order, to justice, to civil
 of property which time had consecrated,
 ecially by our reverence for the primitive
 dent teachings of that Christianity in

power of these "sacred truths" to the intellect of the Caliph, had, by means of them, so won the minds of the Algerine people, that a single wail, wafted over the attentive boy bearing the name of the families, at once identify him as the first sufferers, and dissolve every virtue in man founded on pride. Not every one of them feel that a question at his pulse? In this sense of right and justice in things, can arouse our souls to the interval of years, to dispel the time, and to look at things by their own unchanging moral standard. harbor the thought that time is wrong doing, or avert its power from the government of that Supreme Being. "a thousand years is as one day."

Compared with slavery, all other topics which we shake and inflame men's passions in these United States are really trifling.* On this account it is that we feel how unspeakably weighty the obligation which has, from the first, rested on the American church, to hold forth God's testimony touching the nature of the evil with unflinching fidelity. Dr. Fuller observes that slavery was introduced here "in spite of the protests of the colonies."† But why was this noble remonstrance permitted to die away, and to be changed, first, into soft tones of apology for the system, and at last into the voice of bold and confident defence? Had the Christian church been faithful to her mission, the result had been very different. It is a truth, however, that in relation to this subject, the American church has, to a great extent, laid aside the character of a true and faithful witness, and has incurred censures similar to those which are recorded in the second chapter of the Book of Revelation, against the ancient church of Pergamos, for holding back her testimony, in relation to the prevailing system of idolatry. The message there addressed to her, contrasts her early state of purity with that of the first decline of her character. "These things saith he who hath the sharp sword with many edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is; and thou sayest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you where Satan dwelleth; but I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak

* Page 3.

† Page 131.

that, in order to prepare
the rebuke which he was
shows to them that he was
peculiar difficulties with which
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fluence, he has regard to
the state of society on which
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more for its lower element
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it might be truly said, " &
for although he is called "

The spirit of the ACCUSATION, then, against the Christians of Pergamos, may be thus stated, that, although the Most High would make the most merciful allowances for the small amount of results accomplished by the church in that city, he would make none at all for their corrupting the principles of his religion—although he could bear with the small quantity of good influence which they had put forth, he could not bear with the deterioration of its quality. Small success in promulgating the gospel may be charitably accounted for, but to mutilate the gospel itself is a sin which he will visit with condign severity. The message itself gives evidence, that, after the church at Pergamos had resisted her outward foes with a holy and heroic spirit, she was yielding to the influence of those who were ready to accommodate their Christianity to the times, saying that an external conformity to the usages of idolatry was innocent and expedient. Perhaps some of them advanced, in effect, what has since been urged with zeal by the Papists, that the way to win the heathen to Christianity is not to be too rigidly separate from them, but to tolerate many errors for the present, and to turn a participation in the rites and festivals to a good account. The allusion to Balak shows that some of these Christians had already drunk of the “Ammonitish wine,” which intoxicated the Israelites, which led them to honor Baal Peor and to forsake the law of God. Their conformity did not stop at the first step; “their table became a snare and a trap,” and their spirit of idolatry led to every species of evil. Their destiny, as a church, was involved in their fidelity to first principles. Hence the message sent to them from the isle of *atmos* directs its woe against all those who per-

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idolatry or slavery. Tim
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itself a transgression of the
Scarcely anywhere could a n
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was sanctioned by reason or s
agitation of recent years, ho
men in the land have deem

upon the face of the earth,"—that the men of Europe or America have no more right of ownership in the flesh and blood of the children of Africa, than the Africans have in theirs; and that, not power, or wealth, or color, can give to man a right of property in man. This testimony she should have held forth with a calm martyr-spirit, seeking nought by violence, but to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of his testimony. But, alas! to a great extent, her ministry and members have succumbed to the laws, the politics, the statesmanship, and the spirit of this world,—have altered the testimony of Christ's word, and have publicly declared that his religion sanctions a system of slavery. If the apostle John, who was inspired of old to warn the declining churches of Asia, could descend from heaven with a special message to this portion of the American church, its "burden" and its tone would probably agree with those of this letter to Pergamos, saying, "I know where thou dwellest, even in the midst of a system which Satan has devised to grind your brethren with hard bondage. I know how little thou canst do to change the laws and customs of this people, and break the bands of oppression; but I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of the devil, saying that this system is from *me*, and that it bears the sanction of your Lord and Master. Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth."

Of such a spirit, we believe, would be the message sent to a portion of our American church, if the oracle of God should illuminate another Patmos. The man who, in the view of the civil

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